MONARCH SWITZERLAND · NOVEMBER 2026

Doctoral Programs Key Points

Essential information for prospective doctoral candidates.

Research preparation · Degree pathways
Study format · Tuition · Admissions

BEFORE YOU APPLY

You bring the experience. We develop the researcher.

Monarch's research-based doctoral programs are oriented toward experienced working professionals in management, administration, leadership, business, and related fields. Candidates bring academic preparation, meaningful professional experience, subject knowledge, intellectual curiosity, and a willingness to develop as independent researchers.

The doctoral process supports the transition from professional and managerial thinking to formal doctoral research. Research skills, the preparation and refinement of the research proposal, and completion of the dissertation are integrated into the doctoral journey. Prior completion of an MPhil or another research-focused degree is not required, subject to individual academic review.

Scope of this guide

The research-focused guidance describes academic and applied doctoral study within Monarch's research pathways. The Doctor of Management is an executive doctorate for senior executives with 20+ years of experience, centred on an experience-based manuscript, managerial storytelling, and illustrative connections to management scholarship. Its expectations differ from the research process outlined here.

The Doctor of Professional Studies is offered separately through MMI; consult its program page for the applicable requirements.

Research preparation→

Research focus and degree pathways→

Study format and professional commitments→

Tuition and admissions requirements→

Admissions and tuition support→

KEY POINTS 1–5

Research preparation

1. Direct-to-research programs

Monarch’s research-based doctoral programs are direct-to-research programs focused on the development and completion of an original doctoral research project. Research preparation and proposal development form part of the doctoral journey.

2. No domain-specific coursework

Candidates in these research-based doctoral programs do not complete traditional subject-based or domain-specific courses. The program begins with research preparation and then moves into the dissertation stage.

3. A bachelor’s degree meets the entry requirement

A bachelor’s degree is the minimum academic qualification for doctoral entry. A master’s degree is beneficial, and a prior research degree such as an MPhil is optional. Monarch assesses each applicant’s academic background, professional experience and suitability for the programme.

4. Research preparation is included

Candidates begin with Research Skills 1 and Research Skills 2, followed by the Research Proposal Perfecting module. These stages support the development of the research knowledge and skills needed for independent doctoral inquiry.

5. A completed research proposal is not required to apply

The formal research proposal is developed and refined after admission under faculty guidance. A completed research proposal is therefore not required during the application phase.

KEY POINTS 6–10

Research focus and degree pathways

6. Individualized research focus

Candidates develop their own research focus within the domain of the selected doctoral program rather than selecting from predetermined dissertation topics. Research domains within management, administration, leadership, business, and the social sciences may be considered, subject to alignment with the selected program and supervisory suitability.

7. Master-in-Passing award

Monarch confers the corresponding master's award alongside the completed doctorate. It recognises research completed within the doctoral programme and requires no separate enrolment or dissertation.

- **PhD programmes:** MPhil in Business Research
- **DBA, DOL and Doctor of Applied Neuroscience in Management:** MA in Business Research
- **DSS:** MA in Social Science

The separate Master-in-Exit may be available before doctoral completion, subject to academic review and approval.

8. Four dual doctoral degree pathways

Monarch offers four dual doctoral degree combinations:

- **PhD–DBA:** Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Business Administration
- **PhD–DOL:** Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Leadership
- **PhD–DANM:** Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Applied Neuroscience in Management
- **PhD–DSS:** Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Social Science

Each combination requires individual review and approval. Candidates complete a distinct manuscript for each degree and meet each award's academic requirements.

The usual PhD–DBA route starts with the PhD and adds the DBA requirements later. Current DBA candidates can request to add the PhD while enrolled. This route requires a specific arrangement with Monarch's Administration, and the total duration may vary.

9. Academic and applied doctorates have different orientations

PhD programs emphasize original scholarly contribution and theoretical or analytical inquiry. The DSS provides a distinct academic doctoral pathway for interdisciplinary social science inquiry. Applied doctorates emphasize professionally relevant research and practical contribution grounded in scholarship.

10. Rolling admissions and monthly starts

Applications are accepted and reviewed throughout the year. Programs operate with rolling admissions, allowing applicants to select a starting month following completion of the admissions and enrolment process.

KEY POINTS 11–14

Study format and professional commitments

11. Designed for working professionals

The academic model is structured for internationally based candidates who wish to remain professionally active while completing their studies. Candidates are not required to relocate to Switzerland.

12. Online study and defence requirements

All current Monarch doctoral programs may be completed fully online, including the doctoral defence. No relocation is required. Candidates may select an in-person doctoral defence when offered by Monarch. Workshop attendance is not a prerequisite for online defence.

13. Doctoral workshops in Switzerland

Onsite doctoral workshops provide opportunities for research review, faculty interaction, scholarly discussion, and networking. Workshop attendance is optional. Workshop attendance is not a prerequisite for online defence. Consult Monarch for current workshop dates and arrangements.

14. Approximately 15 hours per week

Candidates should generally anticipate dedicating approximately 15 hours per week to reading, research development, writing, and related doctoral activities. This is a planning guide: the effort required varies with the research stage and the candidate’s preparation and circumstances.

KEY POINTS 15–17

Tuition and admissions requirements

15. Standard and extended tuition pathways

Standard and extended pathways have different tuition rates and minimum registration periods. The minimum sets the earliest possible graduation date, provided you meet all academic requirements. You pay the applicable rate throughout active registration, including any time beyond the minimum.
Check current tuition rates and minimum registration periods →

Before applying, consult the separate Tuition Brochure and Scholarships Brochure, as well as the Tuition Fees page linked above and the Scholarships page. Together they cover programme rates, payment terms and scholarship eligibility.

16. Quarterly billing and monthly arrangements

Monarch normally invoices tuition quarterly in advance. After paying the first quarterly period, you may request monthly billing. Periodic payments are non-refundable. If you withdraw, your registration ends at the close of the paid billing period and you do not owe tuition for the rest of the minimum registration period.

17. No GMAT, GRE, IELTS or TOEFL required

Monarch Switzerland does not require these standardized aptitude or language examinations for doctoral admission. Admissions decisions are based on a holistic review of prior academic performance, professional experience, and suitability for the intended program.

KEY POINTS 18–20

Admissions and tuition support

18. Academic review starts with a complete application

Submit the online doctoral application and provide the required documents. Monarch typically responds to applications within seven business days. We review your academic background, professional experience and suitability for the programme, and may request further information.

19. Tuition funding and scholarships

For eligible programme applications submitted from 1 October through 31 December 2026 inclusive, the 20% Dean’s Scholarship applies automatically upon admission. Eligible women receive an additional 10% through the same programme application, for a combined reduction of 30% of the same eligible tuition amount. During this window, no separate scholarship form or financial-need evidence is required. Check programme eligibility and terms outside this window →

20. Decide whether to enrol after admission

Applying is non-binding. If Monarch offers you admission, review the formal admission information before deciding whether to enrol.

Submit a non-binding application →

MONARCH SWITZERLAND

Doctoral Programs Key Points

Monarch Switzerland

UMonarch.ch

Administration